

MARICOPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTE BOOK

**SPECIAL SESSION
February 27, 2003**

The Board of Supervisors of Maricopa County, Arizona convened at 9:00 a.m. February 27, 2003, in the Board of Supervisors' Conference room, 301 W. Jefferson, Phoenix, Arizona, with the following members present: Fulton Brock, Chairman; Andy Kunasek, Vice Chairman; Don Stapley, Max W. Wilson, and Mary Rose Wilcox (entered late). Also present: Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board; Shirley Million, Administrative Coordinator; David Smith, County Administrative Officer; and Paul Golab, Deputy County Attorney.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Item: Arizona State University's Research Infrastructure. (ADM4900)

Virgil Renzulli, Arizona State University, explained that this year is a pivotal crossroads for both government and Arizona State University (ASU), which he classified as a research university with dreams of increasing their bio-technology based education at ASU East and ASU West. He said that the University had some recent excitement when a New York business man invested \$50 million to build a world-class business school that will benefit Phoenix, Maricopa County and the Southwest region of the United States in yet unforeseen ways.

Steve Miller, Arizona State University, said that this gift has broken a barrier that could open the door to others, who will be willing to lend their name and invest their money in the future of ASU.

Mr. Renzulli reported that Michael Crow, the newly appointed president of ASU, is from New York and chose to come to ASU over several other universities because he felt it has the largest potential of becoming a positive force in education, and he wanted to be part of that transition. Mr. Renzulli said it is unfortunate that Mr. Crow had to come during a financial crisis that will delay the dream, that if he had arrived in 1998 ASU would be "flying" by now. He gave the example of Columbia University who was hard-hit by a similar financial crisis and said it took them 30 years to recover as far as they have, indicating that full restoration is not yet complete. Right now, ASU is at the point that it will either move forward or it will fall back. Moving forward at this point depends on steady funding from the State. If funding is cut too much then the school will fall back because competition is increasing rapidly.

He continued by saying that the university has cut back in all areas as much as it is possible and any more cuts will endanger academic progress. A major concern is keeping the university's "stars" from leaving. He indicated that they have identified the 100 top professors and will endeavor to keep them intact since they are integral to the progressive plan Dr. Crow has in mind. He said they have met with the cities of Phoenix and Tempe and that both have written letters of support to the Legislature. In response to a question from Supervisor Stapley he replied that they would like a similar letter of support from the Board.

~ Supervisor Wilcox entered the meeting ~

The State of Arizona has offered ASU \$14 million in debt service and ASU will endeavor to raise millions more to invest in a focused building and academic expansion program. He indicated that President Crow has met with leadership in both the Arizona House and Senate to explain his vision for ASU's future leadership role, and that members were supportive but not very helpful in remedies to provide financial support. He referenced the "Field of Dreams" saying, "If we build it they will come" signifying that excellent facilities, infrastructure and progressive programs are needed to attract excellent, forward-thinking researchers, educators and students to the campus. He said that Dr. Crow's vision of creating a world-class university would benefit the State and region in countless ways.

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Discussion ensued, touching on a variety of topics. Chairman Brock asked about possible ways of establishing a medical school at ASU. Mr. Renzulli responded that it took years of work and a great deal of money to establish one and with no previous ground work having been laid and no available financing for the massive budget that would be necessary, he did not see any possibility of this happening in the foreseeable future. Discussion also focused on the dearth of universities and colleges in this region and the need to look at primary and high school education and educators to search out reasons so few Arizona high school graduates fail to progress to a higher education. Mr. Renzulli said that for every 20 students who start to high school in Arizona only 2½ get a college education. Dropout ratios were discussed.

Supervisor Kunasek raised the question of higher tuition costs making it increasingly difficult for those students who have to struggle to earn their own funding to obtain a higher education. He indicated that he had graduated from the University's business school and had to work hard to pay his way and to put the necessary hours into study. He said that he resented seeing scholarship dollars going to those who might have higher grades but less motivation than some who have the incentive and no money. He emphasized, "Financial aid needs to go to those who need it the most."

Mr. Renzulli explained that ASU tuition is ranked among the lowest in the country costing only around \$18,000 for a five-year education. He said that one logical justification for raising the tuition is that the extra funds received from those who can afford to pay will be directed to benefit those with less means through financial aid programs. As ASU moves up the scale to attract students who come from moneyed families it will be possible to offer more scholarships and even such things as compensation for students with financial hardships by providing them with free housing. He indicated that those students who live on campus usually fare better than those living off campus, and indicated that ground has already been broken for additional dormitories.

Board members expressed their support and encouragement for the ASU "Field of Dreams" as visualized by President Crow. It was stated by several Supervisors that Maricopa County faces the same kind of cuts from the State as ASU and is struggling to come to grips with providing expected services to the several million people residing in the County. A desire to meet with President Crow and others at ASU was expressed in the hope of finding a way the Board might help to forward their plan.

Mr. Renzulli invited the Board to the ASU campus for a meeting with President Crow and other University leaders. He commented that he has spoken with several groups and he has not had as intensive or enjoyable a conversation as he has had here with anyone else, and had not felt the need to suggest that we need to keep talking with them."

Report only.

RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no items for the Board to consider in Executive Session.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Fulton Brock, Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:

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Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board